

McFADDEN'S ROW OF FLATS.

By the Author of "CHIMMIE FADDEN"
And the Originator of "HOGAN'S ALLEY."

"URE, we're getting that fashionable I'll be having to give up drinking beer and take to mixed ale to be in the swim."

Thus spoke Mrs. Murphy when she heard that Kelly was to open a bowling alley.

Mrs. Dunnigan had the poor taste to reply: "You'd be doing yourself no harm, Mrs. Murphy, if you took to drinking water when you give up beer—soon come the day!"

This was said in revenge on the part of Mrs. Dunnigan for Mrs. Murphy having returned some of the Riccadonna girls' fairy clothes in the Dunnigan wash, in place of the decorous white goods

worn by Della, the twin. Della, who is young and in love, and consequently giddy, wore the fairy article of skirt at a roof party, much to the horror of her good mother, and the frantic indignation of the Riccadonna girls (four), who were prevented thereby from attending the bowling alley opening.

The skirt had to go back to Mrs. Murphy for laundry purposes and was not returned in time for the bowling party, and as the Sisters only travel in an unbroken squad of four, none of them went.

It was a success nevertheless.

As Mrs. Murphy's remark indicated, it marked the growing fashionableness of McFadden's Row of Flats, and as such was hailed with joy by her, an old and loyal Flatter, and with profound pride by Tim, the proprietor. As to the children, it is needless to

say that the addition of such a favoring institution for parties, gambling, fighting and other amusements made a great hit with them.

Slippy Dempsey, or the "Falloff," as he is called, found the roof entirely to his liking. McSwatt, the poet, at once put the ten pins into a set of verses dedicated to Mary Ellen Murphy. They began:

"Like my love for thee these ten pins be!" and ended:

"Why bowl me down with unkind frown?"

Marty Dunnigan approved the alley as exactly suited to his taste for a duelling ground. He imparted this view to Mary Ellen.

"An' you look wid favor upon dat dinky poet McSwatt. His blood or mine stains de new Kelly bowling alley! Nay, hear me, Mary Ellen Murphy! He's too haughty an' he's too fresh, an' I'll push in his face if he makes annudder pass for you wid his poetry."

Mary Ellen only sighed, for she had not made up her mind yet which of the two, McSwatt or Marty the Twin, her young heart most favored, so she only sighed. McSwatt was an office boy, but she did not know yet whether his wages were more than Marty made selling papers. So she only sighed. It was a discussion of their children's affairs of the heart which brought a reconciliation between Meschmes Murphy and Dunnigan, after the slight difference resulting from the remarks opening this chapter. Tim, indeed, was the first cause of bringing the ladies together, for he cannot abide a strife to stand between his tenants.

"By the power vested in me, the deponent further declares that if you'll lower that can, Mrs. Murphy, I'll hasten quickly for the beer," sang out Tim, passing under her window after the quarrel. When he returned with a full can he had Mrs. Dunnigan with him, and terms of peace were soon made. "Sure," remarked Tim, "we must all be good friends against the opening of Kelly's Bowling Alley come Saturday night; for if any quarrel before then they'll not enjoy the lovely fight we may have

on that befitting occasion." It was Tim's belief that only friends enjoy fighting.

So it was while the two ladies were talking over the affair between Mary Ellen and Marty that the Yellow Kid entered the room to get Mrs. Murphy to sew a button on the back of his frock. Unhappily he was accompanied by that dreadful monkey. The Kid should have known better, for, as every one remembers, Mrs. Murphy is the custodian of the parrot, and a parrot and a monkey are not suited to each other's society, and never have been. It was not the first time they had met, but always before the monkey had begun proceedings. This time the programme was reversed. The monkey was perched on the back of a chair intently watching Mrs. Murphy's work with the needle when the parrot quietly and unseen emerged from an empty washtub and saw the chance of its life. With surprising swiftness and unerring aim that much abused bird swooped down on the monkey and fastened its hard, revengeful beak in the monkey's tail close to the body.

There were four wild shrieks. The monkey first, then the Kid when Mrs. Murphy ran the needle into his neck full length; then Mrs. Dunnigan when the frantically struggling combatants jammed the can from which she was drinking light over her face; and last from Mrs. Murphy when the outraged monkey threw a bowl of bluing and a pan of starch over the parrot. But still the bird held on. There was a riotous tumult of noise and motion for about two minutes, and then the parrot flew into its cage carrying the monkey's tail with it. Its only remark as it locked itself in was: "Am I in it? Well!"

There was very little genuine sympathy for the Kid over the mutilation of his pet, for the monk had injured the person or feelings of every one of the Flatters, and on the night of the Alley opening there was much quiet satisfaction expressed over the subdued state of the monk.

Many games were played in the Alley, but in one only was Mary Ellen interested; that was the bowling contest between McSwatt and Marty. She kept score, and kept it so that, no matter how the game ran, neither luck nor skill on either side could make an advantage in the two totals she announced from time to time. "Never," said she to herself, "never will I know me own heart, nor will dose kids know dere own game till I learns how much each one earns." A lady has a right to look out for de main chance when she's moving in fashionable society. No, Mary Ellen, steel your heart till you is sure which of dose two mugs is winning de most long green!

EDWARD W. TOWNSEND.

